WAIFS OF THE MAIL BAGS.

Some of the Curiosities of the Dead Letter Office.

Remarkable Articles Adorning the Shelves of a Unique Museum-Perils of the Employes of the Office-A True Rattlesnake Story.

It would be interesting to know if any of the strange waifs of the mail usually to be seen in the museum of the Dead Letter Office on the second floor of the City Postoffice Building, but now sent in large part to the Exposition at Buffalo, have been recognized by their senders, who might, conceivably, be among the many thousands who visit the great fair from all parts of the country. It is a remarkable fact that no claim has so far been made to any of the curiosities in the Dead Letter Office museum. Many a strange story, perhaps, clings around some of the things received through the mail which have never reached their intended destination. When the Dead Letter Office was located in the building now occupied by the Civil Service Commission the bridge connecting that structure with the then postoffice was known as "the Bridge of Sighs," because over it passed all the "letters

One of the most startling objects ever received by the Postoffice was a perforated tin can containing three rattlesnakes alive and in active condition. Upon their receipt the superintendent sent to the Smithsonian Institution for someone accustomed to handling reptiles to come and chloroform them. The operation was performed successfully, as was thought, and the dead snakes left in the open can theder the superintendent's desk. Two days later a lady happened to be standing near to the superintendent, talking when she heard a peculiar sound which she somehow associated with danger. She turned her eyes to the spot from where the sound proceeded and started in terror as she saw a rattlesnake coded ready to spring. A carrier who chanced to be just entering the room, with some precence of mind, threw his full mail pouch upon the snake and trampled upon it until someone appeared with a poker and put an effectual quietus to the reptile, which, with its two companions, was put into a jar of alcohol and upon the shelves of the museum.

The clerks who open the packages received by the office have to exercise a large degree of caution, as bombs and infernal machines are often sent through the mail. Among the gruesome objects to be seen in the museum are a skull, fingers, toes, and an ear, all human. Whether these came as an earnest that crime had been accomplished, a ghastly hoax, or whether they were gifts sent an impecunious medical student, will probably remain forever a mystery.

The strangest variety and incongruity is to be noticed among the exhibits of the museum, thus giving the later quite a unique character. The motley skulls, starfish, lamps, medicine, Chinese coins, eggs, dogs, a bucksaw, a box of geological specimens, a lemon squeezer, candle snuffers, bootjacks of various sizes, a miniature Chinese junk, fans hair flowers, stuffed birds, horned toads from California, hand mirrors, birds' nests, models of Indian cances, a miniature skeleton, a toy gondola made in Venice, shells, watches, cheap jewelry of all sorts, sets of false teeth, years, return to Farallone Island."

A considerable amount of fanciful if somewhat eccentric taste is displayed in many of the articles on the museum shelves. There is an ornamental alligator carry a gaudy parasol, and beside this zoological curiosity a little clay doll. There are several kinds of explosives represented, from the firecracker to the dynamite bomb. A loaded revolver, half cocked, is also displayed, being addressed to a woman in New York. Among more harmless objects are a washboard, a long-hundled mop, bunches of Easter candles, a cocoanut, and a card upon which is inscribed the Lord's Prayer in fiftytwo languages.

A tragic memento is a mail pouch covered with blood. This was found with the body of the carrier who had been attacked and killed by Indians upon the plains. A card contains a lock of hair cut from the head of Guiteau, the assessin of President Garfield. There is also a cepy of a marriage certificate, setting forth the interesting fact that Samuel Whitehead and Jane Miller were married in the parish church, Manchester, England, June 4, 1804. There are deeds to property, musical instruments, corn popples, cups and saucers, horns of animals, a cab driver's license, a tarantula (received alive), a bottle contain-Ing what is claimed on the label to be a sure cure for consumption, Chinese curios, canvas needles, and a potato bug exterminator.

Among the queer specimens of art may be noted the figure of a negro parson delivering a sermon from a pulpit, all being made of feathers. Beneath this is a little work basket woven by Indians, supported by the figure of a bear. Side by side are

the museum are representative specimens, every day in the year. The labor involved in handling such a mass is something enormous.

"Many of these articles," sald an employe of the office, "are mailed through ignorance of the postal regulations; others are sent through malice, or to avoid express charges or customs duty, while the remainder are the result of carelessness. We have a method of discovering such articles as are dutiable, and the majority of such packages are confiscated either at the mailing station or a subsequent one. When the contraband contents are discovered the packages are sent to the Dead Letter Office, where every effort is made to return them to the sender, or to forward them to the party for whom they are intended, who is required to send the necessary postage.

"Parcels of merchandise are kept for two years, if not sooner delivered, and then the well-known auction sale disposes of them among the community. Unaddressed parcels and such as are

found toose in the mails and received CLEVER TRICKS EXPOSED. by the office more than six months prior o the annual sales are included in the lot disposed of by auction.

"The annual sales, as is probably well known, take place about the middle of December, and many are the curious mistakes that occur at this time. Although there is a brief description at tached to each package, it is wrapped so that no one has an opporunity of examining its contents. The average price received for these packages is about 75 cents.

"It is really astonishing to note the carelessness of very many persons, evidently of a high intelligence, too, in sending communications by mail. It is frequent to see addresses very precise in every respect, but leaving out the name of the addressee, or, this being given, the town or State in which he or she lives. It may, perhaps, appear incredible that persons, evidently of business habits, too, would send checks or money without giving name or address, but thousands of such pass through the mails in that condition, and in many cases it is impossible to discover the owner. After a lapse of four years the unclaimed money is turned into the Treasury, which in this manner receives quite a large sum each year."

Among the remarkable objects of the auseum, sent to Huffalo, is a set of account books kept by Benjamin Franklin when he was Deputy Postmaster General for the Colonies in 1753, the acing kept in pounds, shillings, and pence. It may be added that the office is in constant receipt of communications claiming certain articles alleged to have been sent through the mails and not received, these documents being generally as enigmatical as the articles

STORY OF A WATCH.

Timepiece Stolen in China and Recovered in Alabama.

A magnificent leweled watch, alleged to have been stolen in Tientsin, China, eral weeks ago, has just come to light in Woodlawn, Ala. The watch, which is valued at several thousand dollars, is the property of an English officer stationed Tientsin, and a former Birmingham boy is alleged to have made way with it. The timepiece, apart from its value, is treasured very highly by the English officer, beenuse of the fact that it was pre-sented to him by an English society for distinguished gellantry. Since its disanearance the search for it has been car ried on in all warts of the earth.

eged to be connected with the disappearnce of the watch cannot be learned, as the postoffice inspector who worked up this end of the case is very reticent about the affair, but it is learned that the young man enlisted in Birmingham something like six months ago, and that the company to which he was assigned was deman was a watchmaker by trade, and while in Tientsin with little to do in the way of military duty he turned his attention to doing odd jobs in the way of wetch repairing. He did good work, and the officers, as well as others, soon began the timepiece of the English officer came into his hands. About the same time two other watches of unusual value were also given into his hands. One of these, a dainty timepiece, all covered with jew collection embraces shirts, teeth, els, the property of one of the English disappeared, as did another fine gold watch, the owner of which is unkn

It is charged that upon getting threvery valuable watches in his hands the young soldier deserted and took the watches with him. His disappearance caused a general commotion, and all sorts to apprehend him, but he is said to have made good his escape.

Among others who were called to assist

door plates, valentines, painted fungi. in the effort to locate the missing watches toys, leweled daggers, and a letter endorsed "If not delivered in thirty the mails at Tientsin. He looked over the records and found that the young man had forwarded a registered letter to a party in Woodlawn, U. S. A., before he disappeared. This discovery was communincted to the chief of posteffice inspec the postmaster at Woodlawn to held the package upon its arrival. He then noti-fied Paul E. Williams, of Chattanooga. postoffice inspectur for the district. take the matter up. Inspector Williams detailed one of his men to come to Birmingham and look into the case, and this

Upon arrives at Riemingham the in spector went at once to Woodlawn and called upon the party to whom the pack age from China was assigned. This party agreed to go to the postoffice with the in ector, and if the package was there t ave it opened in his presence. The pack age in the meantime had arrived, and when the inspector and the party to whom the package was addressed called

officer's watch. The watch was taken in charge by the inspector, who will turn it over to chief. Inspector Williams will send it to his superior in Washington, and that officer will forward it to the United States representative in Tientsin, China, who will deliver it to the owner.

The young man who is charged with dertion and with stealing the watches is said to be on his way to Alabama, -Bir-

A FREAK FLOWER.

ft Blooms Spasmodically When Placed in Water.

One of the most singular freaks in the floral kingdom has recently been brought to this country. It is called an "occaslonal flower," for the reason that it has no fixed time to bloom. No mention is made in botanical science of the exister of this marvelous flower. It is a mystery at present that is well worth clearing up. When in a closed condition the occasflower is in color and in form something a beautiful glass flower holder and an with its stem to it. Submerged in a bowl of water for a few minutes and then ta-The Dead Letter Office receives a ken out and placed by its stem in an multitude of articles, of which those in empty bottle, the outer petals begin, after several minutes, to open out. This process is slow but distinctly noticeable. The petals continue to rise and to expand un til they gradually recede. auction is complete it resembles in appearance the starry sunflower, but as re

gards the shape only. The occasional flower remains thus one for about two hours, during which time, the state of humidity lessening by degrees, the fibers begin to shrink and the petals close up gradually in the same way as they opened, until the flower resumes its former position; but by the same sim-ple process it can be made to unfold and to close up again and again ad lib. It is

(From the Cleveland Plain Dealer.) "See here, Thomas, here is a St. Louis she went to the races and lost his money

How Alleged Wine Is Converted Into Water, and Vice Versa.

Potassium, Sulphuric Acid, and Aniline Red Form the Requisites for the Phenomenon-Mysterious Writing Upon Slates Tied Together.

A few months ago in this city an audience was considerably astonished by the phenomenon of a man apparently changing water into wine and vice versa. It is an old trick and the method pursued is usually as follows:

The prestidigitateur invites one more present up on the stage. An assistant then brings in upon a tray two claret glasses and two perfectly transparent decanters, one of which contains red wine and the other water. The prestidigitateur asks his guest to select one of the two decanters and leave the other for himself. No hesitation is possible. The guest hastens to seize the wine and each immediately fills his glass.

astonishing! Upon its contact with the glass the wine changes into water and the water becomes wine. The hilarity of the spectators and the

amazement of the victims are intense. The pretended wine was nothing but the following composition: One gram potassium permanganate and two grams sulphuric acid dissolved in one quart of water. The liquid is instantaneously decolorized on entering the glass of the guest, at the bottom of which has been placed a few drops of water saturated with sodium hyposulphite.

As for the water in the second decanter, that had had considerable alcohol added to it, and at the bottom of the glass that was to receive it had been placed a small pinch of aniline red, which, as is well known, possesses strong tinctural properties. The glasses, it was noticed, were immediately emptied, since in a few moments the wine changed into water loses its limpidity and assumes a milky appearance.

It may also be remembered that non of the guests, who were well-known citizens of this city, tasted the mixtures. Hence they are still alive.

It will be recalled by those present that upon the occasion in question a mysterious message was received by the magician tying two slates together, them a small piece of chalk. This chalk was heard distinctly to write, apparently of its own volltion, as the magician held the slates in his hand, the thing was supposed to be done by spiritual agency, which materially altered matters. The method in which this trick-for trick it is-is performed is as follows:

Two ordinary wooden-framed slates are presented to the spectators and exthe two slates, which are then tied together with a string and held aloft in the performer's right hand. Then, in or the number of spots obtained by throwing two dice.

is found to be covered with writing. This phenomenon, which at first sight by moving a weight athwart-ships on

in reality very easily performed. The writing was done in advance, but upon the written side of the slate there had been placed a thin sheet of black cardboard which hid the characters written with chalk. The two sides of the slate thus appeared absolutely clean. The other state, which is not written upon, is first given out for examination, and after it has been re-

turned to him the operator says: "Do you want to examine the other

And then, without any haste, h makes a pass analogous to that em ployed in shuffling cards. The state over which the cardboard is placed is held by the thumb and forefinger of the left hand and the other slate be tween the fore and middle finger of the right hand, the two hands being then brought together. But at the moment at which the slates are superposed th thumb and forefinger of the right hand grasp the written slate, while at the tent in the same time the fore and middle finger of the left hand take the other. Then the two hands separate anew and the slate. that has already been examined, instead of the second one, is put into the hands of the spectator. This shifting, done with deliberation, is entirely

invisible. During the second examination the written slate is laid flat upon a table, the written face covered with black cardboard turned upward. The faces of both slates are then sponged off, and the one examined superimposed upon the other. Then the operator, having tied the two states together, holds them up in his left hand, of which one sees but the thumb, while upon the poste rior face of the under slate the pail of his middle finger makes a sound resembling that produced by chalk when

being used in writing. When the operator judges that the little comedy has lasted long enough he lays the two slates horizontally upon his table, taking care this time that

The announcement that graduates of the United States Navai Academy at Annapolis who intend to enter the naval construction corps will hereafter be sent to the Massachusetts Institute of Tech. nology in Boston for an advanced course in naval architecture instead of to the long famous schools of England France, calls attention to the fact that some of the most interesting recent un dertakings of the institute have been directly concerned with the building of the

One of the most important of these has had to do with the amount of damage a warship can sustain and still be able to keep the seas. A modern battleship that has cost several million dollars to build is much too expensive and valuable an asset to be risked, and perhaps sacrificed "Th' dem kiyote played it in rag time."

altogether, in an enquiry as to how near she can be brought to sinking without actually going to the bottom; but it is none the less desirable to determine ex-actly how far such a ship may be injured without becoming unseaworthy, as well as how she may be expected to behave after certain definite damages incidental

to battle or storms have been inflicted on her. The difficulty has been solved, however, by the discovery of the fact that the stability of a given battleship or cruiser under damaged conditions can be figured out with almost mathematica precision by the use of models, while the original, for whose benefit the experimen is being carried on, may be cruising peacefully in the antipodes.

These tests by models were originated by a French naval constructor, Bertin, who first employed them in a study of one of the French cruisers. His method was taken up and exploited by Naval Constructor Woodward of our own navy, and was soon after adopted in Boston by Prof. Cecil H. Peabody, the head of the institute's department of naval architecture, as a regular part of his courses. Briefly stated, the object in all the tests which have been made, here or abroad, is to find out what will be the effect of tearing open the compartments of a warship, singly or in various combinations, whether the cause be gun fire, the explosion of a tor-pedo, or ramming, or an accident at sea, such as a collision or striking on an un-

Modern ships of war, as everyone knows, are protected against the fire of an enemy either by an armor belt or by a protective deck, so called; or, leads to the division of fighting shins into two classes, namely, the armored chips and the protected ships. The office of the armor belt is to exclude all except the heaviest projectiles—in fact, it is practically impenetrable by shells containing a really effective proportion of explosive material, and therefore a ship protected by an armor belt is exposed only to such comparatively insignificant injuries as might result from a solid shot. The pro ective deck, on the other hand, starts from a little below the water line and is shaped much like a turtle's shell is intended to deflect missiles of every description from the engine rooms and boiler rooms the vitals of the ship-and, by warding off injury from the lower por tions of the hull, to keep the buoyance and, as far as may be, the stability o the vessel unharmed. This latter end owever-the protection of the ship's stability-is very imperfectly rithined, se of losing their equilibrium from a well almed shot from the enemy's guns, although the danger happens to be mini mized in actual warfare by the fact that such ships commonly engage in action from so great a distance that a serious njury near the water line can seldom be inflicted

The question of stability can be solved having previously inserted between by computation, without recourse to the use of models, but the computation recult. In the method invented by Bertin a complete model is made of the ship whose stability is to be studied, the line which seemed rather remarkable as of the hull being copied in every detail up the chalk could not possibly from its to the point of safety-that is, just beposition make a single stroke; but then | youd the line above which shot and shell may be disregarded as a factor in endangering the buoyancy of the vessel. This miniature hull contains a number of removable wooden blocks representing the ship's compartments. The blocks amidships represent the compartments for the engines and bollers, and the for ward and after blocks the compartments amined in succession by them. A small of the holds or magazines. Then, in or piece of chalk is introduced between der to demonstrate the behavior of the ship when one of the various compart ments is broken open to the sen, the wooden block which takes its place in the model is removed and its weight and the the general silence, is heard the weight of the incoming water made up by scratching of the chalk, which is writ-substituting for the block a piece of lead ing between the two slates the answer of the proper size, with the center of to a question asked by one of the spec. gravity in the same place. In general the tators—the name of a card thought of the lead is to sink the model deeper in the water and to cause it to take on a definit nclination or to change trim-or to do On being separated one of the slates both. In this condition of simulated damage the model is still further inclined appears to saver of the black art, is graduated scale, thus permiting of a direct experimental determination of the pears and it is evident that the ship on which the model is patterned would be

hopelessly capsized in the case of experiments on a pro is the effect of breaking open the com partments above the protective deck. A vessel of this class which was re cently studied at the institute had upper coal bunkers on each side above the protective deck and the experiments which were made the experiments on the model showed that if all the bunkers on one side were flooded the ship rould immediately capsize. When full of coal the bunkers might be broken open b in enemy's shell without any special harm being done; but they will be full of coal only when the ship has her full suply coming out of port, and they probably will not be full when the need is great est, since the coal must be transferred from the upper to the lower bunkers as soon as the latter are emptied or the will be top heavy. This special liability to danger is found to exist to some ex-tent in the case of all protected ships, and the fact has been one reason for the reent development of the new type of ar-

cent development of the new type of armored cruiser.

The study of battleships by means of models has brought out a number of striking facts. For example, it has been shown that if a single engine room or a single boiler room is flooded the loss of stability is very serious, and that if two compartments, as, for example, the boiler room and the engine room on the same side of the ship, are flooded, the ship will capsize. But this serious danger can be obviated, it has been found, by connecting compartments, which adjoin transversely by a door. When this door is opened and both compartments are thus flooded equally on a line running across the ship she will settle an even keel; she will not lose stability.

she will settle an even keel; she will not loss stability.

Supposing two engine rooms to be flooded in this manner, the motive power of the ship would be temporarily put out of commission; but if the door between the two compartments were afterward closed the uninjured engine room—the one which had not been shattered by the actual fre of the enemy's guns—might be pumped out and made usable while the ship could be trimmed by flooding a boiler room on the same side of the boat. The experiments with the model show conclusively that if this were done the ship would not lose stability and at the same time, of course, she would be able to use half her motive power.

on his table, taking care this time that the non-prepared slate shall be beneath. It is upon the latter that the black cardboard rests, and this being taken up quickly with the other slate, the mysterious communication is revealed to the wonder of the uninitated.

WEAK POINTS OF SHIPS.

A Scientific Study of Models Begnn by the Navy.

Course, she would be able to use half her motive power. The tests at the institute include the so-lution of other and more intricate problems than those which have just been explained. A single example now, however, must suffice—the fact that one result of the experiments undertaken has been to explode the popular fallacy in believing that the safety of the twin series was seared by dividing it into practically two slips by means of fore and and the motive power.

WEAK POINTS OF SHIPS.

A Scientific Study of Models Begnn by the Navy.

Ruined His Opportunity.

(From the Cleveland Plain Dealer.) "Yes, there is no doubt that he stole oss. But jess as we war goin' to string up be said somethin' about playin' th' serting for the last time. Well, th' beyone more an' there was a conjecting in

MILLIONS FOR LITERATURE

Americans Spend Enormous Sums Annually for Reading Matter.

The Total Reaches \$174,965,625. zines Are the Least Used Form of Reading Matter-Some Statistics.

While the United States is spending 174,965,625 n year for lierature of all kinds t is drinking \$1,349,191,553 worth of alcodie drinks. And yet this showing is not so bad when compared with England and

the rest of the United Kingdom. Recently the "British Weekly" has been at some pains to discover the relative cost of literature and liquor in Great Britain. It has figured that \$15,000,000 a year is paid for books of all kinds and 519,000,000 for newspapers and periodicals, total of \$24,000,000 a year. But against this the country spends \$800,000,000 a year for drink.

According to this prestidigitator in numbers, facts, and figures, the United States pays more for newspapers than for almost every other form of reading matter put together. He places this news

8174,065,625

The basis of these figures has been taken with reference to the number of newspapers, the number of school children, and the average number of readers of adult age in the United States.

For the 50,506,436 persons over school age in this country, it is figured that an average of \$1.50 each a year for some kind of newspaper is a low estimate. It will hardly pay for the average weekly paper ereas a considerable portion of this adult population reads daily papers.

are 16.738.363 children of school age in the United States. The estimate of \$1.85 for each child, covering school books and the attendant juvenile litera-ture, is also a low estimate. Of this total number of pupils the fact that 14,662,488 of them are in the primar, a animar grades of the public schools lowers the average for the whole number. Much of this expenditure is more or less compu

As porchasers of the magazines and Ilustrated weeklies, there are supposed to be 12,250 persons who will spend at least an average of \$3.50 a year. Many of these are subscribers to dozens of periodicals; others are the buyers at news stands pon the impulse choice.

Only about 2,200,000 people buy novels as they run from the press. They do such of this simply that they may keep up to date in literature. It is a part of their capital in literature. It is a part of their capital in society. Most of these buy liberally. Plenty of readers are to to \$100 to \$150 a year, steadily. At an average of \$1 spent by each, the total is mposing in its seven figures.

But as compared with almost any other catures in the list, the money that goes or miscellaneous and technical books is Into this field, of course, go the ooks of the "book manufacturer," books hat are built only to sell to a class which has more money even than it has f judgment and taste.

With these in that item, however, are he books of weight and substance, many which cost so much in the making. when technical skill is paid for and the sales estimated. Then the inumerable editions de luxe swell the total o a significant sum.
"No country on the globe can compet

with the United States in the making of books and literature to sell," said this authority. 'The phrase does not mean "In Illustrations the American book In the attractioness of covers and front

out an American print is a show window naturally attracts. "Walk down a street in any American

city or town. If you see a crowded corner somewhere ahead of you, it is quite as likely to be caused by a bookshop window as by an exhibition of bargains To an old countryman, coming from some European monarchy, it is a revelation to display. There are figures and faces in t that are out of keeping with the arti-A man in faultless fushion may be at el ws with a mechanic in overalls, but as between the two, it would be hard to de ide which is more interested.

"This is the secret of the American publication. They are made to attract The reader is invited to read. Reading is They are made to attract. made easy; and not only that, but to read a borrowed book is not sufficient. From eading it the reader desires to own i secause of its attractiveness of print plate, and cover.

"As to our magazines and periodicals they are as popular in Great Britain as they are at home. Our comic papers are eized upon in England with more avidity than ever was "Punch" or "Sloper" America, I admit that a funny English oke of a funny English cartoon the funniest thing of its kind, but there is such a wide distance between them. There are so few of them in a year.

As to the comparison of drink money and that which goes for literature, at least it may be shown for intoxicants take the line of least alcohol resistance. In other words, more beer and less whis-

key is consumed every year. In 1882 the United States consumed 73, 556,976 gallons of ardent spirits and only

Even with the enormous increase in population in the last two decades the figures for alcoholic beverages last year vere only 87,000,000 gallons, while the con o 1.175,722,000 gallons. According to popu tion the corsumption of wine shows de crease.

THE GEYSERS DRYING UP. spouters in Yellowstone Park Will Some Day Disappear.

Some members of the American Asso ciation for the Advancement of Science who have recently visited the Yellowston National Park are of the opinion that he geysers in that region will some day but the decline of the geysers is so rapd that the present generation will see th ast of them. Edwin Hinckley Barbour, of Lincoln

Seb., professor of geology of the Univer sity of Nebraska, and Acting State Geologist since 1891, has some radical views on the subject. Mr. Barbour is an author and is in charge annually of the Worrill geological and hydrographic surveys. In his letter he says:

"The rapid decline of the geyser phe-nomena in the Yellowstone National Park eems to be but little understood, but to the changes seem startling, and to the geologist alarmingly rapid. If one may udge from impressions, it seems safe to sume that if the decline in geyser acivity noted during the past four years hould continue for the coming right of the geologist will have disappeared. As a sure of the park should not postpone the trip a year, but should visit it at once. "It may be stated generally that this iting the park should not postpone the

decline of activity is manifest in the ger-sers, the mud geysers and paint pots, pools and steam vents, many of which have become wholly or partly exfinct in the last four years.

As specific cases it may be stated that

at the mammoth hot springs the activity seems not one-tenth that of former times. The Total Renches \$174,965,625.

Newspapers Lend the List-MagaJupiter terraces has greatly declined during the same time, and the Narrow Gauge
-a fissure vent-and other attractions beoming all but extinct, Rearing Mountain is now silent, though steaming. In the Norris geyser basin the Black Growler is less active. In the Lamer basin the splen-did Fountain geyser is extinct, with a feeble substitute near by named the Dewey The Giant Paint Pots are greatly con tracted in size, the pink half being extinct in the upper basin. Some of the better known, as well as as many of the esser geysers, are extinct or supposed to be. Among these are the Splendid geyser, and the Bee Hive. The Grand geyser, which used to play daily, now crupts ir-regularly about three times a season. The Cascade, which crupted about every quarter of an hour, in 1895, now plays once a day. The unmistakable impre ion of frequenters of the park is that the cha are serious and much more rapid than is generally believed.—Chicago Chronicie.

OLDEST MUMMY YET FOUND.

Intes Back Several Thousand Years and Is Now in England. Thousands of years ago the remains of

n Egyptian were placed in the tomb. To day they are one of the most valued pos-sessions of the British Museum. The grave of this old settler was first seen by covery to a British official, who immediately sent a couple of Egyptian soldiers to guard it day and night until it could e safely removed. The body is not a mummy of the ordinary historic Egyptian period, such as that of Rameses II, the father of the Pharaoh of the Exodus. It was never bound up in linen or cased in any painted coffin, but was merely coated a preparation of bitumen, the Arab word for which is mumia; hence our word mummy. To reach the period when this man hunted along the banks of the Nile it is necessary to travel backward in time through the modern period since Eliza-beth, through medieval Europe, through the whole history of Rome and Greece, past the time of the earliest mummled king the Museum possesses, past ever Menes, the earliest king to which Egyp tian records make reference, who, accord-ing to Mariette, ruled about 5004 B. C. Then we are among two prehistoric races one of the conquerors and the other the conquered, out of which sprang the Egyptlan race of the earliest dynasties. It is with these remote stocks that this man is nnected Considering the conditions in which he

was found, it is evident that he was associated with a late period of the new Stone Age of Egypt. He was buried in a characteristically neolithic grave (the graves of this period are covered with rude slabs of stone), and has neolithic pots and chipped flint weapons and knives found in other parts of the world. The fine, thin knives were perhaps plac-ed in the grave as part of a funeral ritual. They should be compared with the Egyptian flints in the prehistoric section of the Museum; they are almost identi-

of the Museum; they are almost identical with those found in the grave. There
is, of course, no inscription of any kind
on the pots, knives, or grave, all having
been made long before the invention of a
written language. It is curious to note
that certain ancient Egyptian documents
mention traditions of a race called the
Trehennu, who had red hair and blue
eyes. This man had distinctly auburn
hair. He was burled on the western
shore. In later times every Egyption was
burled on that side of the river, and
Egyptian models of the deathboats on
which the body was ferried over the Egyptian models of the deathboats on which the body was ferried over the stream may be seen in the Egyptian gal-lery.—The Sphere.

USING BOTH HANDS.

Advantages to Be Galacd by Becoming Ambidextrous. The question should ambidexterity be ncouraged is answered in the negative by a writer in the "American Journal of insanity," and upon the ground that, while coarse movements may be performis to gain for it all the attention that art |ed nearly as well by one-half of the body is by the other, accurate and expert ovements require a higher organization of one-half of the brain than the other. Hence the more expert hand should be consciously still more and more specializd; making the ordinarily quiescent half of the brain assume controls tends, it is said, to impairment of the mental pro-cesses as well as inferiority of physiologic

speed and dexterity. heory being untrue. The writer has loubtless been misled by observation of the function of speech, which is single, and in execution requires the control of single centre. We have but one voice, out we have two hands, which in many cases at different instants may be put in

Many surgeons can operate equally well with either hand, and we have seen men who could write as well with the one hand as with the other. The critic of ambidex-terity may reply that this is impossible y may reply that this is impossible synchronous movements, forgetting in the musician, and especially in the ist, there is the most marvelous exness of both hands executing most plicated and entirely different function, and at the same instant.

e arguments against ambidexterity are not only inconclusive, but are rely contradicted by facts. Surely alternative argainst a desirable freedom.

in arely contradicted by facts. Surely alin they are against a desirable freedom
of the mind. Without the musicians' amsidexterity life would be deprived of
much charm. We should encourage "dichied attention," and that large power of
the mind over the body shown in the synthronous control of multiform activities.

American Medicine.

A STOWAWAY.

Enormous Appetite of a Passenger Revealed Another's Presence.

Cantain Saunders, of the steamer Engtween Antwerp, Boston, and Baltimore, ells a remarkable story of a stowaway Some months ago an American got tranded in Antwerp and applied to the owners' agents there for a free passage Boston. The man was over fifty years f age and untitted for rough work any kind, so the kind-hearted captain took him as a passenger and promised him a comfortable room. After a few days at sea, the steward notic-ing that the passenger had a tremendous apppetite, remarked the sea air was doing him good. sorning, however, the steward, who had ast left the man at the table eating his reakfast, went out of the saloon into the cassenger's stateroom. To his stupefac-tion he saw the man lying in his berth. "Good morning, steward," he said, pleas-

ntly. "I have overslept."
"But how the dickens did you get herejust left you--But the steward was too thunderstruck

But the steward was too thunderstruck to finish his sentence and literally flew back to the saloon, only to see the passenger still busy with his breakfast. Then he went to the captain and said.

"There are two of 'em, sir." Then he told his story.

The captain followed the steward to the saloon. The passenger still sai there eating they then opened the stateroom door, only to see the same apparition that had so amazed the steward.

"Good morning, captain," said the figure lying in the berth.

"Who the dickens are you?"
But the cuestion was immediately answered by the cater, who appeared in the doarway. His twin brother sait up and gazed at both captain and steward. There were two of them, in fact, but they were nearly identical in form, feature, and attire. These two seen had taken turns in seming to table, hence the voracity which

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ries-Many Rare Documents Stolen.

Five hundred dollars for eight pages of dingy reading! That's a good deal of money, you will acknowledge, to invest in four small leaves of print paper," observed a Wainut Street dealer in rare books the other day. "However, that is the price I offered a man a few days ago. The eight pages wanted were of old Pennsylvania laws. My offer was declined with thanks, the owner being something of a bibliophile himself, and knowing that the scarcity of these pages would permit him to fix his own figure for his set. The pages would be passed over or destroyed by the ordinary reader, yet there is not another known copy in existence. You will readily understand that they are val-uable when you consider the size of my

"I bought a pamphlet for 50 cents from another bookseller several weeks 20, and sold it within a few days for \$40. That us merely a stroke of luck in bu The pamphlet was on this bookseller's shelves for sale at a stipulated price fixed by himself.

Dealers in rare books seldom make urchases from strangers unless the latter can give satisfactory information of now the books came into their possession. This is done partly from a seifish motive and partly from a dexire to protect their

"Perhaps you remember the case, several years ago, when a New York dealer purchased at different times from a couple of young men in Washi uable collection of autographs of eminent Americans of the Revolutionary period, including those of George Washington, the elder Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and Burr. The young men represented that they were Government employes. They said Congressional Library many papers had been relegated to the waste paper heap and that they had sought the

eserved them. There was no doubt as to the genuir ess of the autographs and documents of-ered for sale. They were brought to this lealer, in such surprising numbers that his suspicions were aroused. He wrote to the department at Washington. An investigation there brought to light the fact that there had been stolen many of the Government's most valuable and precious ase and evidence beyond dispute was obtained against the young men. When arrested they broke down and confessed their guilt. The dealer had sold the au-tographs for big sums. Some of the pur-chasers, I believe, did withstand legal proceedings before restoring them to the

Government. "So, you see, it stands us in hand to be careful of whom we buy. The dealer in are books has his regular customers. His mission is akin to that of the confidential lawyer with a client. He is familiar with the literary taste of each customer. His first thought in purchasing is that such a person would like such a book. The book is put aside and word sent to that customer. No dealer depends entirey upon the trade of his own city. There are in New York and Brooklyn perhaps a hundred or more private libraries of delphia has fifty or more. I have cus-omers in every State in the Union. One

f my best is in Portland. Oregon. "fhere is little chance for deception, ven if a dealer were so inclined. A true bibliophile knows the value of a volume the minute he reads the name. Therefore, when I get hold of a scarce book, all I do is to acquaint my customers with the fact and its state of preservation. Philadelphia in the taste for old books and the amount of business done by dealrs in rare books come, in their order, Chicago, New York, and Box of the smaller towns and villages some of the most valuable libraries may be found.

than the ordinary child's primer. It had a double value because of the fact that it was printed by Benjamin Franklin. There are few copies in existence. A book that is valuable to one dealer may not be valuable to another. For instance, a Trenton bookseller came in to see me and asked if I wanted a book that he had All of which we deny, both fact and in his pocket. I told him I did and offered him \$30. This was satisfactory to him, and he volunteered a willingness to trade the book for books on my shelf. He selected fifteen volumes, the combined price of which amounted to \$30. I felt hat I had bettered my stock, and he, no foult, thought he had bettered his.

"You will likely be surprised when I tell on that in this God-fearing country there is practically no demand for rare beological books. It is almost impossible to sell them. No one seems to want relicious books."

The dealer here brought out a recognized edition of Martin Luther's printed at Ienae, 1556. They are in four columes, bound in old vellum. This particular copy survived destruction by fire at the hands of the ecclesiastical authori-ties of the day, who took exceptions to the great reformer's writings. The coving been in contact with flames, and the leaves are like punk, showing the effect of intense, dry heat, and, where the flames did not touch. For practical use the books are destroyed, although all the reading is there. But the demand for re-ligious books is so slight that the volumes are on a shelf containing the cheaper

"Scarce books on American history sell as fast as we can get our them," the dealer continued. "Early corarest of all American publications. This is due to the fact that they have probably been destroyed. At least, only now and then does one bob up. During the civil war the price of paper was so high that nearly everything in the way of old was sold for paper pulp to be made over. That was before inventive genius had de-vised other and cheaper ways of manufacturing paper, and better qualities, too. have been destroyed, particularly in the outhern States, where at times during the war newspapers were printed on the

ack of wall paper.
"During the war and for years after ookbinders cut down the margins of nagazines and pamphlets entrusted to heir care to an outrageous extent. those days, and in some there are abolutely no marglins to the pages. The 6 cents a pound for all their wasta eraps. The succeeding generations of bookbinders followed the pace of their redecessors without knowing why they

"Close trimming is merely a relic of the old practice during the war. We are geting back to ante-bellum days, though, and the volumes from the best publishing ough edges, as in the days of yore."-

Lingering.

(From the Philadelphia Bulletin.)